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ORAL HISTORY

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OWENS GLASS HISTORY PROJECT

TAPE #1

AN ORAL INTERVIEW WITH: SANDRA PETERSON

CONDUCTED BY: CHRISTIE KASPRZAK

DATE OF INTERVIEW: MAY 25, 1994

Sandra: I sound terrible on tape.

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: I sound so hickey. I am hickey, that's why. (laugh)

Christie: Okay um, we'll just begin with um, you said you started working in 1966. At Owens.

Sandra: Right, yes, yes. I went to work June the first in 1966. I started in the um, uh...then we had uh, an industrial engineering department, and they had probably about a dozen IEs in that department. And I was hired to assist them. Whatever project they were into, I would be working with them, and I did a lot of the footwork and a lot of the uh, uh, time spent in the plant that I could do that took valuable hours from their research and [Christie interrupts] from the project.

Christie: And what is an IE?

Sandra: Industrial Engineering.

Christie: Okay.

Sandra: Mmm-hmm.

Christie: What kind of projects did they have?

Sandra: They did all kinds of time studies, productivity studies, that type of thing, you know. They'd go along to a particular job, say it'd be on a palatizer, and they would study every move, every function that the employee might make on a particular part of that job. Then they would work up uh, um, I don't know whether it would be uh, it might involve time, it might involve product waste. Whatever, you know, a more efficient way of handling that particular job. [Christie interrupts -- inaudible]

Sandra: I worked with those fellows, a lot of the math work and completion of projects and...It was really quite interesting for me.

Christie: Did you have the same job then the whole time you were there?

Sandra: No, I was only in that area about a year. Then I transferred from there over into the service department which is the department that handled all uh, customer uh, related activities, whether it'd be uh, orders, whether it'd be shipping out uh, ware. Whatever in-, involvement um, might be required with that type of the work in the plant, that's what that department did. I worked over there probably um, six months, and then I moved from there into the accounting department. Um, and um, I worked

with the forming department. Now that is the area, and at the plant, we call that the "hot end". That is where all the furnaces were situated, where the bottles were molded and shipped through the layers down into the packing floor. Uhm, that, that, at that, at the time I went into accounting, every department received bonus. Every department was set up on a bonus schedule. But in a few years, they uh, eliminated that, and uh, the only department uh, to receive bonus was forming, and at the time the plant closing, that was the only department to receive bonus. It was uh, they had what they call a "bonus buy-out". They gave them a little higher wage per hour in lieu of a bonus system. So, forming is the area that continued to receive a bonus, and um, that department um, worked around the clock. Um, some of those folks up there...Well, as far as I'm concerned, they were all very skilled people. But, that was a very important department because that's where the bottle was formed, and the quality was started with the forming department. And as it came through the layers, it was sent to selecting, into, -to, uh, select and, and to evaluate any problems that might be going on. And of course, the quality and specification department came into play with that too. But uhm, uh, on that job, I um, uh worked with a lot product-, uh, -tivity reports, I, I calculated the bonus. It was uh, just about everything revolved around the numbers that came out of that department. Every morning everybody was standing over you know, just waiting, you know, "Whoa, what was productivity, what was uh, percent increase, you know, what was job efficiency, da da dada. And also bonus was paid according to what you figured, you know, had happened the day before. It was an interesting job. Uh, all math. Uh, everything was math. Uhm, I did that job for some time, and then uh, I also did um, a lady had gone, that I was replacing, had gone off on maternity leave, so then when she returned, uhm, I was working the uh, uh, I have to think back on this...uh, secretary uh, job in that department, accounting department as well. And in that period of time, that office was booming with people. I don't recall exactly how many folks we may have had in there. I'd say at least 30 people in that area.

Christie: What time was this?

Sandra: Uh, this woulda been uh, let's see, '66, '67, '68...Probably um, '69, '69, '70. Uhm,, that, that department was just lines of people because they were computing bonuses, you know, and everything was done, uh, we had a computer system, but at that time, it was not as sophisticated as it was at the time the plant closed. We had a very sophisticated computer system that um...We had a direct hook-up with our um, corporate office in Toledo, every department did. Uh, but at that time, um, more of the work was done manually. Um, but as uh, technology advanced and all, you know, jobs were cut because they could be done more efficiently. But I, I performed that function as secretary, and then I went uh, back to uh, the job uh, on forming as the principal clerk there for several years. And um, you know, due to retirements or whatever, you know,

jobs would... people would leave, and then I would fill in where they left. But I wound up back up on that job, and um, then uh, the job was um, cut to one person. It was two people at that time, a principal and a junior uh, accountant there. And it was cut to one person, and uh, I was the youngest, so the gal that uh, was gonna work another year before retirement, of course, got to, to perform that job, which was only right. So, uh, during that time, uh, the time between there and the time I went to personnel in '83, I worked just anywhere they needed me. You know, I worked corrugated, uh, that was an experience 'cause that was a department uh, of its own, an entirely different entity. I'm tellin' you (sigh), I was kinda lost, but uh, it was interesting. I was glad I had the opportunity to learn it.

Christie: What kind of work was that?

Sandra: We made our own boxes there at the plant, and that was only done away with just about uh, five years ago. Our plant was uh, very diverse, and it uh, it was just, people who came in for a tour would just be in awe. That's what they saw.

Christie: And it changed a lot...

Sandra: Yes...

Christie: ...over the times.

Sandra: ...yes. I saw drastic changes uh, some of 'em are saddening. Most of 'em are saddening now that after I look back on all the happenings over the last 28 years. But um, uh, I worked these jobs, whether it be corrugated, whether it be that they needed somebody in accounting, if they needed somebody in uh, data processing. Wherever they needed somebody, I floated in. And then, uh, the job became available uh, in the industrial relations department uh, in 1983. So I bid on that job, and I did get it. I mean I had never worked in the uh, personnel-industrial relations department. Believe me, it's been a learning experience (laugh). It's been...I feel, I feel very fort-, fortunate to have had that opportunity because I feel like it's uh, um, it's made me be more aware of, of other people, their problems or feelings or, and even mine. So, it, it was a wonderful experience for me. I worked very hard uh, but I loved it. Um, I've, I've continued in that department until the time of the plant closing. As my, my title was employment coordinator, but at one point in time, personnel was also booming with people, and it had uh, they had cut, over the years, down to the point where I was the only girl in the personnel area. Um, we did have a nurse um, workers' comp. coordinator slash nurse, and uh, she was up in the first aid area, but um, she left us in October of '92, and uh, we went about six months without anyone there. So uh, Norm Hanley, who was the safety uh, director, and he's another person you'll enjoy talking with, um, he worked a

lot up in that area, and I helped him there too. So I got to learn even a lot more to closing, believe me (laugh). So um, it's been an enlightening experience for me. I, I'm very, I'm very sad about the plant closing, not, not only because 618 people lost their jobs, including myself, but I'm sad because it's uh, I think the community and our, our whole city and state's gonna really suffer the loss of our plant.

Christie: Oh yeah.

Sandra: We had some extraordinary people in the plant.

Christie: Now you said some of the downsizing, I guess, the way you worded it was "saddening" -- what kind of changes...and how was it sad?

Sandra: Well, you saw, you saw people uh, as, as, as technology advanced and all, you saw jobs being done away with. You know, at one point in time, and this was before my time at O-I, but I understand at one point, they had over 2,000 people working there. And I saw, I, I think when I went there, we had 23 machines when I went there. And when I left, of course, we only had about eight machines. Um, but there again, a lotta that is due to the uh, advancing technology where we could run more sophisticated equipment faster with less people and less machines. We were down to about 52 people per, per um, line up there on uh, in the uh, selecting area, and it used to be maybe 85 people per line. So, we saw a lot of cutting back, and uh, I just hated to see jobs going, you know. Of course, I wanted to see our plant stay right up to snap with the technology, but you know, it, it, it's still a little upsetting when you all the jobs being done away with.

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: That part of it was sad. And then um, you know in the spring of '93, we lost about 22 salaried folks who took an early retirement package. And you could see then that something, you know, this wasn't good, what was happening. So, those are the things er, that, that kinda bothered ya. Plus, you know, the glass industry was in a decline and has been for some time. So that made us all more in tune with everything that happened. You know, that would make our ears go up, "Uh-oh, what's this mean?" So uh, those were the things that kinda bothered ya.

Christie: Yeah. Well, you said um, before we turned the tape on, you had said that uh, you knew everyone in the plant.

Sandra: Yeah.

Christie: It sounds like you were friends really with a lot of people.

Sandra: Uh, yeah. I think so. I hope so. I feel that way. When I went to personnel, in the um, accounting department, it's a very structured job, very structured. Personnel was as unstructured as anything I've ever done. You had a lotta work to do, and you never knew how you were gonna get it done because you were dealing with folks constantly. And um, that was just something that, that you learned to deal with. At first, I had a little problem with it because I thought, "I can't get my work done." You know, I could [inaudible] I'm just fooling with these people all the time, but uh, I, I somehow adjusted, and uh, I spent a lot of time at the plant. I stayed there um, uh, we just worked, in personnel we worked as much as we needed to work to get it done. I might be there 12 hours, (Christie mumbles) I might be there 14, I might be there nine. You know, I just never knew. When we had projects such as safety outings and all that, our department did all those things. We not only put it together, we worked them. And um, whatever it took, that's what we did.

Christie: So you worked with both management and the hourly workers?

Sandra: Mmm-hmm.

Christie: Did you socialize with these people outside of work?

Sandra: Uh, not necessarily. Um, the social functions that went on at the plant was our department's responsibility. I put together all the um, service award banquets, um, you know, directed United Way campaign, um, children's Christmas parties. Whatever happened, it came through our department, and uh, I started work on the service awards, which was a major function at that plant over the years. It has been, that's the big event of the year. And people just loved it, and they looked forward to it. And it was done with as, just as much prestige as we could get it.

Christie: Now they had that yearly.

Sandra: Yes.

Christie: Until when?

Sandra: Um, well, we did not have it in '93, but we had it scheduled. We had to cancel. Mmm-hmm. Um, I have the book, the 50th, uh, somewhere, with my memorabilia here. Uh, I didn't keep all those books. Um, the library, Central City, has them back, service award books, back years, years, years, years back. I've sent them all down there. Uh, I think we've had probably 52 service awards. And uh, they were done for a number of years. Uh, most of the, of the service awards were held at the clubhouse across the street, uh, until the credit union assumed that building, and then they, they downsized it so it wasn't really uh, um, just didn't serve the purpose for our service awards because we didn't have a

reception room, but uh, before that time, uh we always had 'em there, and the people loved 'em there on premise. But after that, I've had to have 'em, I had 'em at uh, Guyan, uh, for several years. Uh, the last two I had at Gateway. And they were just uh, um, I just don't know what industry could've done a better program as far as, as what Owens-Illinois did for the people. They, they provided them with uh, a wonderful evening, they gave 'em uh, a lovely gifts, they gave 'em um, free portraits, um, and uh, a beautiful program. It was really nice what they did for them. And it was fun to do. It took a year. I started in January getting ready for the one in the, the fall in October. It took that much time to do 'em. Um, but they were enjoyable, they really were.

Christie: Now since you have so much contact with the workers, um, I was just wondering, in the different jobs that other people had, the hourly workers, um, what kind of jobs were most of the women in or most of the men in? Was there any kind of noticeable difference?

Sandra: The ladies um, uh, a lot of the selectors and up in the selecting department, I should say, uh, is where a lot of the ladies worked. We did not have any women at all back on the "hot end". Uh, that's the only area that I know of that there were no women. Batch and furnace was the real, um, that was the dirty, heavy um, area to work in, heavy, you know, lifting batch and all that kinda stuff. But I do know of a gal that worked out there on a, on a uh, short term basis one time, on a job posting. Um, we had women in the shipping, we had women uh, uh, maintenance area did not have any women. Um, gauge shop had a lady apprentice one time. She didn't work out, but um, uh, she was there. Gauge shop was merged with maintenance towards the end. That's where uh, these fellas were all journeymen, and they worked on the cold end equipment -- cold end being the selecting department or the layers and all that kinda thing was runnin'. There's a lotta women in the selecting area. Um, the men, of course, there were men in selecting as well. Um, um, we had um, shift foremen in the selecting department, we had uh, uh, two ladies at the time of the closing were ship foremen in the selecting area. Um, the office, uh, the salary group, uh, had downsized considerably. Uh, a lot of uh, gals were in the salary group, uh, as far as clerical over the years. Um, we had one lady supervisor at the time of the closing. And she was the Q & S -- quality and specifications supervisor. She hadn't been with us very long.

Christie: And you mentioned, I think in personnel, you said at one point you were the only women there?

Sandra: At the end, I was the only woman in the personnel office, yes. At one time, I don't know if you remember, how long you've been in the Huntington area, but if you remember the little, the little brick cottage on the street next to the guardhouse, uh, where you all probably had your picture made that, where the garden is now, uh, and the uh, veterans' memorial plaque is out there now,

that used to be a brick, um, like a um, a house. You know, well, that was personnel. There was three floors there: the credit union was in the downstairs floor, uh, the personnel was on the main floor and insurance, and of then course, the third floor was the meeting room and also files and everything on the third floor. Um, that office used to be, I, I can't tell ya exactly how many gals were out there, but a number, there was uh, probably six or eight out there then. And then uh, our insurance person, our insurance clerk, um, who also handled retirements, when she retired, um, oh, five, six years ago, I guess, then the nurse took over all those functions in addition to the workers' comp., and she had quite a load as well.

Christie: So in your personal experience and I guess in all your different jobs that may have been different, um how'd you feel about your opportunity for advancement, your pay...?

Sandra: Um, I think Owens-Illinois was probably one of the better paying jobs in Huntington. Um, your job was rated. You could either be a three, four, five, six, or on up, or even a um, an exempt job which would be rated by points. Um, at the beginning, when I first went to Owens, I did not find that uh, that supervisory positions were very accessible for them. I felt, you know, I, I didn't see that happening. But I think that's probably true of most industries back in 1966. You didn't see gals getting ahead like you do now. Uh, and at the time of the closing, that had improved considerably. Uh...

Christie: For you personally?

Sandra: Well, uh, I would have liked to have been able to had gotten a better rated job because it would have uh, enhanced my retirement. Uh, I did bid on everything coming and going. Yeah, but uh, at the end, uh, and it wasn't because...I had mixed emotions about that. You know, where does money come into play and where does things as far as your job come into play? So um, I did bid on one job that was available in the accounting department just before the closing, before it was announced. Um, I didn't get the job. Um, it would have probably helped, helped my retirement considerably. But uh, you know, I wasn't really all that upset about 'cause I liked where I was, and I thought, you know, but I was, the job I was on, the only bad part about that was um, I was at the top of the rate group. I couldn't go any farther. And unless they reviewed all the rate groups, and said, "Okay, every rate group is gonna have a five percent increase," that you can go that much higher, then I couldn't get a raise. So once you reach that top, you know, you were there. Uh, the one thing I think they could've done maybe, as they did away with jobs, and in my case uh and many others, you had to assume more responsibility. I thought the jobs maybe should have been reviewed and said, "Hey, look this job has, it no longer has this job description from 15, 25 years ago. It's thus and so now." And, and as I understand it, that they are uh, company-wide

now doing away with all industrial relations directors. So probably a person who did the work that I did um, will, would be doing a lot of that, that supervisor's function, and maybe they will do that for the girls that are left. I hope they will.

Christie: There's just one more question along this line. Were there any particular instances that stand out in your mind over the years where you felt you were passed over for a job um...

Sandra: I don't think so...

Christie: ... inappropriately or you felt like...

Sandra: ...no...

Christie: ...you had good opportunities over the years?

Sandra: We just had uh, I don't know that I can really say that. Um, because you know, there was a lotta jobs I had hoped that I would get, but then I couldn't say the person they chose was a bad choice. You know, so I don't think I could say that. Um, you know, I think sometimes with the feminist movement, sometimes we tend to, and believe me, I firmly believe that if I'm qualified to do the job that a guy can do, if I can truly do that job the way he does it, that then perform every aspect of it, then I should receive the same pay he receives, and also I should have the opportunity to bid on that job. But a lot of the jobs at that plant, and that's, I'm particularly talking hourly positions, uh, I would see ladies bid on, knowing full well that that was not a job a lady should have. It was too hard, it required too much for a woman, and uh, I just felt at that plant, there were certain jobs that women shouldn't try to do. But and many of them tried it, and they didn't make it. But they did have that opportunity. I completed, you know, I did all the documentation on the AAP laws, affirmative action laws, and you know, women were given the opportunity to bid no matter what the job was. Ah, but, but on a, you know personally, there were jobs, yes, that I would have liked to have had the opportunity to do because it would have meant more money; it would have helped my retirement; it would have meant thus and thus and thus and so all the way down the line. But, um, you know, I don't really know the reason I wasn't chosen for them. Uh, so maybe the reason was very valid, you know. But I'm, I'm not gonna say that I let it bother me, you know. I've al-, I've always been very thankful for my job. I always have been. All I said, when the plant closed, that it's one thing I never had, in retrospect, to worry about is the fact, well I never knew what I had 'cause I did know what I had. I did know. And, uh, I think a lot of the people are going to know now too.

Christie: And what about management? Most of them were men in management?

Sandra: Mmm-hmm.

Christie: Did you have a good relationship with...

Sandra: Uh-huh...

Christie: ...your management?

Sandra: ...mmm-hmm. Yes, I always did. I never had a problem one. Uh, I had um, um, the supervisor I worked for initially in the industrial relations department was a fantastic person. I just don't know how you could ask for a better supervisor. He's now gone on to be a plant manager in uh, Chicago Heights, Illinois. And he's a dynamic person. Um, all the, all the supervisors I had in industrial relations, you know, I had no problems at all. Even in the accounting area, I've always been able to get along, you know, I never really had a disagreement with anybody.

Christie: Okay, that's great.

Sandra: No, uh-huh.

Christie: Um, you also said earlier, that your husband at the time worked at the plant.

Sandra: Yes, I met my husband at the Huntington plant.

Christie: You met him at there?

Sandra: Mmm-hmm, yes, he came to, um, he came to Owens-Illinois, uh, when he graduated from college. He graduated from uh, uh, Columbia University in Missouri. And um, he came to Huntington as an industrial engineer. And um, you know, he was um, quite taken with the area. It was something different for him, believe me. (laugh) And uh, we were married for 15 years. He had um, he completed his uh, master's while at, while at um, Owens. And um, he received his master's from Marshall. And um, then he went to work for um, uh, Kaiser for about six months in Ravenswood, and I thought, "Well, if he thinks Huntington doesn't have a lot to offer, wait 'til he gets to Ravenswood." (laugh)

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: And uh, when he got up there, I thought, "Just wait and see, just wait and see." So, in six months, he was back with Huntington Alloys. And uh, you know, at the time of our parting, that's where he was. I don't, he's not in Huntington now; I think he's back in Missouri now. Um, but uh...

Christie: Did you have like the same kind of hours?

Sandra: Pretty much, uh-huh. Yes...

Christie: Yes.

Sandra: ...uh-huh. Yes, he worked industrial engineering; I was over in accounting at the time. And uh, in fact, uh, he was the industrial engineer for the forming department at one point in time, so I had to work with him. And uh...

Christie: Ohhh.

Sandra: but that wasn't a problem. We got along fine.

Christie: Did you have children?

Sandra: No. I do not have children.

Christie: You don't.

Sandra: I have godchildren. (laugh)

Christie: You do? (laugh) Do, did anyone else in your family, siblings or parents, ever work at the plant?

Sandra: No, no.

Christie: They didn't.

Sandra: And you're gonna find that's quite unique because most people have family who've worked there. No, I didn't have family that worked at Owens. Um, uh, after I went to work there, I had a cousin's husband who came to work, and then I had a um, a second cousin who came to work. But that's the closest it ever got...

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: ...to, to me having anyone that I know.

Christie: A lot of people told me that um, they initially started at the plant...

Sandra: Mmm-hmm...

Christie: ...because they had family...

Sandra: ...yes...

Christie: ...there.

Sandra: ...that's true. It's very...

Christie: What made you first start at the plant?

Sandra: Well, um, I had worked at Pilgrim Glass for uh, five

years, and um, and I was going to night school and all. And I just wanted to, to improve myself some, so I was looking for a better job. And um, at the time I got the job at Owens, I was, I had, I had already accepted another job. And uh, then uh, Merrill Sockwell, who was the industrial engineering supervisor, I had entered an application up there, and then he called asked me, you know, would I interested. Well, I just accepted a, another position, and he said, "Well, you know, you still think you'd be interested?" "Well," I said, "tell me what the job is." And he did. And I said, "Well now, I would be interested." And he said, "Well, come by after you get off work at five or six, whatever's good for you." So, I did, and in two weeks, I gave two weeks notice, and then I went up there and um, and he was, oh, he was fant-, oh, I loved the man. He was just uh, he'd just retired, and he was just great. You know. I loved him so much. I really learned so much. I got to go into every, no matter what project he, if, if, if a, if an IE were, would be working on a project in the corrugated department, then he'd, you know, he'd say you needed some help then, I just went like a puppy dog behind...

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: him, and we went and studied and did all that and came back to the office and, and um, compiled all of our information. Oh, I just tell ya, it was, and those fellas were fantastic. They were just wonderful.

Christie: Huh.

Sandra: So it was great experience for me.

Christie: Sounds like it.

Sandra: I grew up there really.

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: I grew up there.

Christie: Um, I also wanted to ask you, um, it seems like you, in your personnel job, you had a lotta contact uh, I think you said you did some work with the affirmative action?

Sandra: Yeah, I documented all the records on on that kind of thing.

Christie: Do you remember the Opal Mann suit? Were you...aware of that?

Sandra: That had all actually um, that had already started when I went to um, personnel. Yes, I do remember about it. I know, uh, probably in 1984, 85, I hadn't been in personnel very long, and

there was another suit, um, the um, Norma Brooks um, Brooks-Haskins, I think, suit came up at, had been in, in oh, it'd been in the courts for like 20 years where, you know, they felt that women weren't given the same opportunity as men to work shut-downs and that type thing. And that suit came um, what was settled probably the second or third year after I went to personnel, and it was settled in favor of the uh, plaintiffs. So um, we had to go back over every female who had ever worked at Owens-Illinois. Can you believe? Uh, we went back through every record we had and checked to see whether or not they would uh, have some time coming to them. And for the people who were still working, some of them may have gotten two, three, four years of seniority. We had to make all those kinds. We brought a gal in during the summer. We hired her from Manpower. In fact, her husband was one of the uh, um coaches uh, for the football team at Marshall, John Tanuta, his wife, Dory, came in and worked through the summer. And um, uh, she was a teacher, so she, she taught in the fall, but she worked the entire summer with me on that project. It was just, oh, it was horrendous...

Christie: Mmm...

Sandra: job to do, but that, I, I very much remember that, that one.

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: But the Opal Mann, that was before I went to personnel.

Christie: So wha-, wha-, did those kind of suits make some changes in the plant besides having to go over...

Sandra: Not nec-, well, not necessarily. Um, in the uh, in, in con-, contractually no because over the years, the contracts improved, you know, the union contracts and all, um, you know, women were given every opportunity, particularly with the affirmative action program they had at Owens-Illinois. Um, it didn't make so much difference there because that was al-, already in the works. It did make difference as far as uh, you know, seniorities and all those things. Some people got more retirement because of it, and it was very meaningful to a lot of people.

Christie: And, um, the race issue is involved there as well...

Sandra: Not real-, no...

Christie: ...or was it just the, the women?

Sandra: ...it was the women.

Christie: Okay.

Sandra: Uh-huh.

Christie: So um, over the period of time, a lot of change between '66 and...

Sandra: Oh...yes.

Christie: '94? Um, were there additional um, blacks hired or...

Sandra: (sigh) Um...

Christie: ...were they hired for certain jobs?

Sandra: No...Uh, when we did hiring, um, you know, we had a drastic cut-back in 1980. Three hundred-and-some people were laid off in 1980. So um, of course, they had five years recall, uh, at Kerr contract language gave them three at that time. And then the new contract um, increased that to five years, so they all had five-year recall rights. And we just, you know, cut 'em off and sent everybody a letter. If they did not receive a recall within five years, then they were no longer considered uh, eligible for recall. Um, then when we started rehiring with lots of retirements, when we started rehiring, we went back to those people first and tried to pick the people who they felt, you know, deserved another chance at a good job. We didn't go back to somebody who'd been a continual problem, whether it be absenteeism, whether it be somebody who had drug problems or whatever. We'd try to get the people who had really, you know, appreciated their job and were good people. So we got a lotta those folks back. Um, but then, the off-, when we, when we exhausted that source, um, in the last um, probably um, I think '92, we hired um, about 20 people in the fall. They only worked a month. That was the last hiring. But uh, the last few years that we've hired, we went strictly through the job service. We called up and we said, "We were, we, we were going to hire 20 people. Send us 40 people. We want a good mix. We want females; we want uh, blacks; we want uh, that's; we want a good mix of people." So that, the responsibility was lying with the job service that they supplied us with a good mix of people to choose from. And when they chose, we, they had a panel. Um, the folks came in, and they had a preliminary, uh, now let me preface that. When they came in to see us the first time, we had a real preliminary meeting in the club rooms where we show them a film, we told them what we did, um, basically uh, where the job would be, in what department, you know, the hours that would be shift work. It would be whatever, um, what the starting rate of pay would be, so if they weren't interested, that was the time to vacate, you know. So then the next step would be to um, set up interview sessions, and the folks came in, and we set up uh, I set up appointments, uh, and we had a panel which might consist of the production manager, the uh, finished products manager, the personnel director, our director, um, might be um, it seemed like we had one other one in that area - - maybe somebody from a maintenance area. But we would have half-a-dozen salaried folks who would be working with these people, uh, part-, particularly heavy on the department they'd be going into.

And um, they sat with that panel, and they would ask 'em questions. And everyone had their own evaluation sheet at that time. And um, you know, there was um, you know, a lotta ladies hired, um, quite a few blacks, and lots of vets and, you know, I couldn't see any discriminations at all.

Christs: That's great.

Sandra: Yeah.

Christie: Um, you mentioned the big cut-back in the '80s.

Sandra: Uh-huh, in the 1980s.

Christie: There was new management at that time?

Sandra: No, it was the business climate. The...

Christie: Oh.

Sandra: ...business climate.

Christie: Yeah, 'cause I, I had thought that the management had changed times and...

Sandra: Well,...

Christie: ...changed over [inaudible]

Sandra: ...the plant managers, usually two to three years, um, with the plant manager, and they moved 'em, you know, they tried to, um, you know, when they felt like they had done all they could do to con-, you know, made all the contributions they could to that plant, maybe another plant needed their expertise in whatev-. Some of 'em might be strong in cost; some might be strong in um, uh, industrial engineering issues, productivity and all. You know, everyone had their strong point. And if you had a plant that might be meeting someone that has a lot of um, ...The one plant manager we had, um, Jim Kunkle, who's now at the Zanesville plant, um, he was an ex-personnel director at Huntington, and then he went on to other jobs. And then he came back to Huntington as a plant manager. He was the one there before Danny Silvis, who was there at the closing. And Jim was very strong with um, motivating people. And um, we got Plant of the Year, um, that year, 1989 Plant of the Year, safety awards just galore. Our safety program was just growing by leaps and bounds and because he was so into it. That was his, you know, and community issues, United Way. I tell ya, we had that drive. That man, he talked with me every evening. Every single evening, "where are we now?" You know, "what agencies are getting most of the uh, donation?" I had to have a report ready every evening for this man. He was into just...motivation was his key word, you know. And um, um, I guess that is what they use when they

move those, those fellas around. But um, um, lotta people felt if we'd had him here, we might still be in Huntington. I don't know, you know. I've heard a lotta people say that. One of the fellas from Zanesville was in uh, to pick up some equipment. He said, "I don't understand all this high tech equipment." And Zanesville had nothing. He said, "You're moving all that to Zanesville. We got your plant manager." He says, "Why don't they just bring him back to Huntington?" I said, "I've been trying to figure that out." (laugh)

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: But they said we had a lotta freight problems, you know, getting our freight out of here, and um, problems with uh, taxes and...but the state wasn't cooperative, you know, with holding an industry with that magnitude here. So there seemed to be many factors involved.

Christie: Do you think they were political problems that...?

Sandra: Well, you know, at one time, just probably a couple years ago, we'd just rebuilt two furnaces, which were major \$6 million projects. And they weren't even begun to wear out. And uh, on the last one we had, um, we rebuilt after it was done. The city, you know, they came down, and they, they practically arrested our plant manager and said that uh, we did not have the building permit for doing that furnace. And um, you know, it took a lot of legalities to get us out of a stiff fine there just to rebuild a...we weren't starting...we were just repairing the one we had, just rebuilding the furnace we had. So, I mean, we did get out of the huge fee they wanted, but it should never've happened, you know. Those kinds of things...

Christie: Yeah. Um, one other area I wanted to get into is um, union. Were you part of the union?

Sandra: No, I, salaried folks were not union.

Christie: None of the salary folks were union.

Sandra: No, no, I was, of course, familiar with all the union uh, we had a local, uh, 212, which was the largest union, that's the P and Ms, production and maintenance people. We had Local 75, which were the flints, um, American Flint Glass Workers' Union. That was a small union, about 17 people, in an old repair department. The other was Local 116, which is a part of the P and Ms, production and maintenance as well, but it's separate because it was the people in the forming department where the bottles were actually made. Uh, the others were cold end people. So they, they are in the same P and M union but a different local number. So we actually had three unions.

Christie: Do you remember any particular strikes that happened that were...

Sandra: Yeah, I do. I remember one back in 1968. Um, and we were out for several weeks. Uh, that's the only one I re-, you know, I was involved with. I hadn't been at Owens very long when that one occurred. Um, I can't even remember all the details involved in that one. I know I found a bunch of pictures when I was cleaning out personnel that I just really tossed because I thought, you know, they just don't make any sense. So, uh, but we were out several weeks then. And that's the last one I know. Of course, there's always grievances. Then they go through the grievance procedure steps, you know, you file the grievance, and you have a step two, a step three, a meeting. Then if it goes into arbitration and all those things, and some of them are valid. Some aren't. You know, and that's where you go through that weeding-out process.

Christie: Right, right. You don't remember what this particular strike was over?

Sandra: I was trying to think--what was that one over? Um, I think Terry Wilkinson was the plant manager then. It seemed to me like the mold makers had somethin' to do with that one. I really don't. Maybe some-, one of the other people would uh, I was in accounting then, and I, I didn't, it didn't have that, as much meaning to me then in that area as it would in personnel.

Christie: Mmm-hmm. And um, finally, I just wanna, to talk about, uh, you said you didn't really socialize with too many of the people you worked with outside of work.

Sandra: Well, you know, uh, we always had uh, you know, Christmas parties, salaried folks Christmas party we all got together. Um, we um, you know, if somebody was havin' a baby or somebody was gettin' married, we'd always have something. Um, uh, I guess I considered my whole, socially, I, I guess, I guess there was no divider. One thing just, you know, my, my work environment more or less fed over into my social life in my particular situation. Uh, a lot of the folks were very social outside the work place.

Christie: Right.

Sandra: You know, I had, towards the end, I had a situation where, you know, like I said, I might work 12, 14 hours. And um, and my mother's very sick, you know, and, and, and you know, when I left work, I had to try and get home. But um, um, kids' Christmas party--that was a big deal there. You know, um, I'd pre-, I would prepare for that for like three months, four months maybe. And ya, you know, I'd be there a whole Saturday dealing with the kids' Christmas party. So, you know, I have to say in my particular situation, my, it was intertwined. Very much.

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: If you had a safety outing, you'd start maybe at eight o'clock in the morning, and the group would get there at three in the afternoon. If you had a safety outing, say we had Plant of the Year, okay, that meant a BIG blowout, you know. It was down at our pavilion. I'm sure you've seen the pavilion down at the park. Our employees built that. Um, we'd have that place ready, when the shift ended. We would have four different outings to cover every shift and every person. So we would figure whatever, we'd look at the calendar and we'd say, "Okay." And I made up the calendars, you know, as how the shifts would work. We worked five days, off two, five days, off two, five days, off two. Um, when, we had A, B, C and D shifts, then we had day workers. Okay. Whatever day A shift worked and got off at three in the afternoon, that's the day we would schedule, one of those days we would schedule that outing. Then we' have to wait 'til B shift was working day, and then we would have to have it four different times. And we would intertwine the day worker departments so that they got included in one of those four times. So we had to, by the fourth time we finally got it right. And, and we would start at 8 a.m., and we would have that pavilion decorated. We'd have, I would have entertainment there, a band, a DJ--somebody. We'd have every kind of games goin'. We would have food galore. We'd have um, fillets on the grills, baked potatoes, salad, rolls, desserts. We would have drawings every so often. We had, I mean, this was a big deal. And it, and it was without any, but you know, we had a budget, but the plant manager would give us our guidelines. And as a committee, we would work all this out. So we might start that at eight in the morning. We'd still be there at 10 o'clock at night. When the thing was over, we had all that to clean up. So, uh, you can see that was a...(laugh)

Christie: (laugh) a real project.

Sandra: Yes, it was. And every time, Mr. Kunkle was a man that, that, he really believed in rewarding his employees. And the people loved this kind of thing. And um, he did lots of these things. Sometimes he'd get, just kinda get a wild hair, and we wouldn't have a whole lot of advanced notice. So, we've done it, you know, in a hurry many, many times, but um, but they were great. They didn't, that was fine, but you could see how, you know, my l-, my, my job was just a little different than anybody else's. So, uh, but a lot of the, of the uh, hourly folks actually had clubs. Um, they had like the um, like the one, one shift might have the ship-, the shipmates, one might have the um, uh, b-somethin', b-e-e-b-somethin'. Uh, and I've forgotten the other two. They had their names. They would take uh, uh, rent a bus and go on a tour or they would, uh, you know, they had mother-daughter banquets at the clubhouse. The clubhouse was a very important part of all our lives over the years. You know, it just, we used that clubhouse for everything--kids' Christmas parties, for um, New Year's parties, for all plant parties, just, it's just that place is full of

history. I don't know if you've been in there.

Christie: No, I haven't.

Sandra: Uh, in the, in the clubroom, see before the credit union took that building, bought the building, that front part was a reception room, where the credit union is now. All that was uh, we had a, a game room, we had a room like like if I had service awards. I had a room for the cocktail party. And then the gymnasium was where the activities actually, the awards banquet took place. We had a fully equipped kitchen. We had everything in there. Um, one time, they even had, had an exercise room in there. But then when the um, um, credit union took the building, that, actually the only thing left was the gymnasium itself and the kitchen. So um, we still used it for lots and lots and lots of things. But, um, um, I would, I would love for you to just go in there, um. They have...

Christie: [inaudible]

Sandra: ...Yes, they have one whole wall. Ike Effingham can show you with the names of deceased Onizers back there on the wall. Um,...

Christie: Like plaques or...

Sandra: And Ike Effingham who is, you know, he is local 22 retiree...

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: ...group. He can help you with that.

Christie: Yeah, we'll be speaking with him...

Sandra: I worked with him a lot on things. He's a fine gentleman. He really is. And then the retiree club meets there every month. Um, the maintenance club, I, I don't know if there's still intact or not, but they meet there once a month. Maintenance men, they have a card party and eat and just have a good time. Um, one other thing I might mention to you is, I don't know if anyone said anything to you or not about the um, the welfare fund they have at the plant. It was um, when we had our United Way uh, a lotta folks, you know, well, everyone could decide where they wanted their money to go. Do you want it to go to United Way? Do you want it to go to a particular agency that's not under United Way? Do you want it to go to an age-, an agency that is under United Way? Just to that one agency. Or where do you want your money to go? You know, you had that option, which made my job real interesting. But anyway, a lotta folks would say, "Naw, I want all my money to go to the O and I service fund." Or "I want my money to go 90 percent United Way, 10 percent to the service fund." Okay, the point I'm making is the service fund was, and it, it used to be called the O and I's club,

and that was years ago. They had a complete committee, who'd, you know, they took care of the bowling banquets, and bowling was always a big thing, softball teams and all that kinda thing. Well, as the years went by and things cut back, you know, it all changed. So, um, what's left of the Onized club now is just simply um, you know, I keep all the books on all that. And um, we had a fund where, whereby the monies that were donated to the service fund was used for O and I's projects, O and I's...

END OF SIDE 1--TAPE 1

SIDE 2

Sandra: ...they were off due to illness, they had a family crisis. Whatever happened, we had some funds to help them out there. Um, that's, that's always been uh, kind of a mainstay that people were people were always very, very uh, they were more than happy to help out, you know, and give their money for anything like that. They were just generous. Um, Ted Mance, um, I don't know if you talked with Ted...

Christie: I haven't.

Sandra: ...Ted and I, he's the chairman of the welfare fund, and he's worked with it even longer than I have. He worked with it long before I came to personnel. And he could give you some ideas on what they really used to do. But he and I sign the checks, and, and worked together on that project. But um, that's what I, when I say it's not just Owens-Illinois per say that's gone, there's just a lot of things there. It was an atmosphere of uh, kind of caring, you know. Um, it was more like a family type atmosphere.

Christie: Did you feel that way at the, at the end or was that...

Sandra: Oh yes,...

Christie: ...you still felt that way?

Sandra: Oh yeah, yeah, uh-huh, I still, I think of...

Christie: 'Cause I knew so many changes had happened, and I didn't know how the atmosphere in that sense might've...

Sandra: At the end...

Christie: ...changed.

Sandra: ...it was a very, we all went through uh, periods. First of all, it was rejection, you know, "we can get this changed, we can get it turned around." And then we go through um, uh, you know, you go, you go through, after this denial thing, uh, then you kinda go through uh, anger and then at the end you accept it. There's

nothin' else. You get to that acc-, acceptance. I said it kind of remind me of what I've always read and heard that maybe cancer or terminal patients go through. You know, it was a very traumatic thing. It's, it's, for me, I, I'm just now beginning to feel some of the panic from it. I didn't feel panic at all because I was too busy, I was too busy and too involved in everybody else's uh, situation to think about my own. You know, when you are standin' at or working at your desk, and somebody walks in and, and might be a big hefty guy from down in maintenance area that's maybe 45-ish or, or been there 20, 25 years, and he starts to talk to you and breaks down in tears and you're trying to deal with him, it's, it's um, it's not easy to do. We had one, one person in that, that kinda fits in that scenario. And, and you know, he a complete emotional breakdown. He's still, still strugglin'. Yep.

Christie: So you're just starting to feel [inaudible]

Sandra: Yeah, I'm just kinda, and as I, as I'm uh, you know, I'm just getting out into, into, I'm just getting my resume completed, and I've read it over a hundred times, and I say, "Is that all I am?" you know. (laugh) Uh, and, and you know, I'm even findin' some difficulty with um, even, even going in and approaching uh, uh, receptionists or whatever. You know, "Are you accepting applications?", "May I leave a resume?" or whatever. I'm, you know, that's even been hard because it's been 30 years since I have not had a job. And um, I'm sure that with as many um, college graduates as we have who are looking for jobs. For someone that's my age, is not gonna be that easy. I know that isn't supposed to be a factor, but if I were hirin' somebody, and I had someone like you come in and, and you know, well-qualified, I would probably look at you first. Uh, and our area, I feel is pretty depressed when it comes to jobs right now. So it's, it's frightening, and when I saw the list of folks who are, who are planning to take some training um, you know, I can see.

Christie: Then did you say you're gonna do that?

Sandra: That's a possibility. If I don't find something to do, I might do that. Yeah.

Christie: And that's at Marshall University?

Sandra: Yes, yes. Uh-huh.

Christie: How'd they set that program up?

Sandra: It's the JTPA program, and it's been funded through the state for dislocated workers. And they are supposed to pay for 104 weeks of training, and those people can draw their unemboy-, in-, umim-, unemployment benefits during that time frame. And um, they're also, the way I understand it, I hadn't been able to get any feedback, um, hopefully this week, I can. Um, they're supposed

to help 'em with um, transportation, um, food, you know, lunches or if they need childcare, whatever to help 'em with that. Um, I hope it uh, all comes through for them because um, my concern is even after you complete the training, you know, with this many people on the job market, it's still gonna be tough.

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: We have had quite a few people leave Huntington. And I'm aware of that. The uh, O-I___ plant in Columbus took um, a number of our people. Um, that used to be an Owens-Illinois TV tube plant. But it's no longer a, although they haven't changed the name yet, it is now owned by the Japanese. And they're doing very well. So they came to Huntington and interviewed our people, and they took uh, oh I don't know, I think 20, 25 maybe at that time for those folks who could move. And, and I have to say this too, um, uh, um, most of the employers that I've talked with around the area, they seem to kinda have an allegiance to, to the folks that are coming to them from O-I. They, they, they want to give them...

Christie: [inaudible]

Sandra: ...the first opportunity, you know, they can. If they have an opening, they will consider an O-n-I, or if they're qualified, you know, before they would someone else. They are doing that. I know of several. I have uh, I've seen that happen.

BACKGROUND: Truck passing.

Christie: So that...Would that maybe help you in your position?

Sandra: Well, I hope, you know, I'm just getting started. I don't know if anybody's gonna be interested. The first application I filed was at Marshall University. (laugh) I don't know if they're gonna be interested in me or not. (laugh)

Christie: Well, you have a lot of experience.

Sandra: Yes I do, I do have a lot of experience.

Christie: And in a number of different...

Sandra: Mmm-hmm...

Christie: ...positions.

Sandra: ...Yeah, yeah. And I've been fortunate to take, get to take a lot of um, um, extra training through the plant. You know, I've, I've gotta, I've got that on my resume, you know. I've been through Dale Carnegie, sexual harassment, uh, time management, managerial skills for secretaries. I've been through all those seminars.

Christie: And the plant paid for you to go to these?

Sandra: Oh yes. Oh yes. They paid, actually, the plant had a wonderful education assistance program. Uh, and any of our employees who were goin' to school, and uh, I used it because I went to Marshall at night, and uh, if you, you know, passed your class, and uh, your supervisor feels that it is pertinent to your job, now that is a new ruling. Used to be it didn't even matter, but now it did. Um, you were reimbursed for your class.

Christie: What kind of courses did you take at Marshall?

Sandra: The classes that I've had? Oh I've, I've had um, English, I've had political science, sociology, um, accounting, um, business law, um, what have I missed? I loved the sociology. That was my favorite.

Christie: Me too. (laugh)

Sandra: I worked hard, but it was large--50 people in that class.

Christie: Wow.

Sandra: It was a big one.

Christie: When, when were you going to school there?

Sandra: I've gone to school over the last two years. Just, you know, whenever I could...

Christie: [inaudible]

Sandra: ...But with, you know, the illness here at home now, it's, it has kinda inhibited...

Christie: Yeah...

Sandra: ...my goin'.

Christie: ...you spend a lotta time taking care of your mother.

Sandra: Yeah, yeah, really, uh-huh.

Christie: Is that just recently or...

Sandra: Uh...

Christie: ...has she been ill for a while?

Sandra: ...she's been on the oxygen full-time now for about two years.

Christie: Would that cause any problems with your work...

Sandra: Uh...

Christie: ...'cause it's hard to juggle doing both?

Sandra: Well, she could pretty much stay by herself during the day. Um, my sister comes as much as she can. And then um, you know, uh, (stutter) Owens-Illinois, to me, um, they're very, a very family-oriented place. If I had ta, to leave work to um, come take her to a doctor or...that was no problem. None. You'd, the-, they were wonderful people...

Christie: Mmm...

Sandra: ...just wonderful people. They'll nev-, as far as I'm concerned, I don't think I could ever find another...(laugh)

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: ...job like the one I lost.(laugh)

Christie: Aww...

Sandra: Yeah.

Christie: ...do you, do you get benefits from them now?

Sandra: Ah, yes, as a salaried person, I could either take my pension or I could've take a lu-, taken a lump sum buy-out. And...

Christie: [inaudible]

Sandra: ...every person salaried person, every one of us took the lump sum. And the reason for that, um, I have had uh, sometimes I've had regrets that I did that. But the reason I did it um, if you're an hourly person, according to the contract, and you were receiving you pension, and you died before you, you had drawn it for, for six years, your benefactors could continue drawing exactly what you did until a total of six years was reached. Okay, if you were salaried and I died tomorrow, it's gone. There's nothing. And after 28 years, I just hated to think that I would leave nothing, so that's basically why we all took our lump sum.

Christie: Mmm.

Sandra: Of course, then we'd hoped to invest it, but now the stock market is kinda bellowing (laugh)...

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: ...up, so (laugh)...

Christie: (laugh)but that helps, I guess, since you're in the process of trying to find another job. [inaudible]

Sandra: You can. You can invest that lump sum, and then uh, if you feel the need that you have to draw from. I don't even have mine all invested because of the, this crunch with the stock market wasn't the best time to do it.

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: Uh, a lotta people've lost some money. You know, because it's just down right now. But I've, I've often thought back, you know, "Did I do the smart thing or should I maybe...", you know, even an-, and just take a chance on whether I'll live or not. But um, also I probably would not have been able to draw unemployment benefits either if I'd taken a pension. And you can...

Christie: Is that right? I didn't know that.

Sandra: Mmm-hmm. They figured on uh, four weeks if you draw um, a pension then they would take whatever you, you got, divide it by four weeks and say, "That's what you earned per week." So if it's not, if you, if it's not equal to \$280 a week then you could draw the difference. But they would deduct, but with a lump sum, uh, they only deduct the week you, you received your check. So that wasn't a problem, but um, ever-, 100 percent of the salaried folks did take a lump sum.

Christie: Okay.

Sandra: We continued to receive, uh, I still had my health coverage. After June, it will not cover dental or vision. But I still have my health coverage which is wonderful. A lot of the hourly folks will not have that.

Christie: Ohhh. They don't get that.

Sandra: Huh-huh. Through June, six months. We all got six months severance, us salary folks, uh, the hourly was figured on uh, years of service, um, 25 years up to, I think it was up to 30 years. I believe that's the way it was figured. Um, they were given a severance pay. Um, that was about it. Then the people who had uh, that were 55 or 30 years of service received their pension. Less than that, nothing.

Christie: Hmm.

Sandra: But it was vested. So when they get to be retirement age, they can receive what they had earned. But it, when they are 55, if they want to draw it early, they can with a, with a percent deduction. But um, yeah, I, I had been going in the plant. Um, I haven't been in this week. Um, you know...

Christie: Yeah, I was gonna ask you if you keep in touch with any of the people there...

Sandra: Uh, well...

Christie: ...do they [inaudible] contact with them?

Sandra: ...some of the people, they had requested that uh, a person be kept in personnel through May, but Toledo said no. They, so I finished up enda March. Problems still kept coming in. People calling in, s-, "Oh, I need a reference from you to get this job," um, "I need uh, my prescription card isn't payin' for my medicine," and they don't know what to do. You know, so I still pick up the calls. I'm still, even from home, I pick 'em (laugh) up. And then do what I can to get 'em expedited. And um, I've had to go in, well, I worked probably two weeks with no pay because (stutter) I just wasn't ready ta-, I couldn't leave. I just had too much pending.

Christie: Hmmm.

Sandra: But um, you know, I, I don't mind doin' those things. I really don't. If it's gonna help somebody get a job or whatever, that's, that's all that's really matters. So we have five hourly people left with one salary person there.

Christie: And how long are they gonna be there?

Sandra: I talked with 'im, he called me yesterday on some matters. And uh, uh, he, he, ther, he said it could be any day. I don't know.

Christie: Oh.

Sandra: So that's what's left of the Huntington plant.

Christie: Well, before we finish, is there anything you thought you wanted to talk about that I didn't ask, um, any events or...

Sandra: Well, like I said, you know, I'm probly not the greatest historian. Um, the emphasis um, on the service awards, that was always such a wonderful, wonderful thing for everybody. They loved it, they took such a active part in it. And uh, um, you know, I'm sure you've already run into it if you haven't, you know, that, the folks at that plant, they're just some, some wonderful, wonderful people. You know,...

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: ...the-, that I met over the years at that plant. Um, we have some remarkable tradesmen there. Um, I worked with a fella who was a carpenter down. That's all he did. He was a carpenter down in

the um, um, maintenance area. And when we left, uh, when the building was torn down, where our office was on the street and they moved us inside, it was back, ironically, it's back in the office where I started, in the old IE office. I started and finished there. And uh, they remodeled the office and, you know, it was nice, too small, but it was nice. And my desk, which is sittin' out in the middle of the floor, well, I'd had a, a counter with a marble top, you know, over there in the other building which was great for working with people. And I said to this fella, "Tracy, you know," I said, "I, I need something here for my desk. I, I don't have any privacy. I have, you know, I don't have anywhere for people to complete forms or anyth-. I need somethin'." He said, "Well, we're still workin' on this office. Wu'll, we'll think of somethin'." So, weekend went by. We wen-, I went back on Monday. There was this cartoon drawn on my desk, and it sh-, and the old counter I had in personnel had been removed and put up in front of my desk just the way I had it over there. And uh, the cartoon was drawn, and he had this lil' red-haired girl and this light bulb that said idea, and then it showed the, the...

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: (laugh)... counter in front of me. I said I never forgot that (laugh).

Christie: Awww...

Sandra: He was, aw, he was the most perfect skilled man I've, if you could see his work. It was just, you just had an idea, and I mean, bang, ya-, you had it. Those are the kindsa people you remember and think about. I'm sure he's, you know, I think they wanted him to teach, and I always encouraged him to do it. Uh, on the JTPA program for carpenterin'. He didn't feel he was, he, his confidence was waning a little bit, but he said, "I do things a lot, the old fashioned way." I said but you get it done and you do it perfectly, so I don't know if he's, um, he's gonna work outta town a couple months, and hopefully, he'll get back in and, you know, do some training 'cause he's getting older.

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: But yeah, there's unique people in that plant, and I, and as, as you interview, you're gonna probly run into a lot more interesting people to talk to than I am, but um, it was a tremendous place to work. And I'm glad I got to be a part of it.

Christie: Well, that's wonderful. That's really all unless you wanted to add anything else.

Sandra: No, I don't know of anything. Of course, I could talk on all day...

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: ...and tell ya all the experiences and that which really didn't gonna mean much but...

Christie: Well, personal experiences are, are often just as important, uh, tryin' to see how the plant affect people's personal lives as well...

Sandra: Mmm-hmm. Oh it did...

Christie: ...as their work lives.

Sandra: It certainly did. Every aspect of their personal lives because um, uh, you know, a lotta people, if they had a vacation planned, they would call me and say, you know, "Can you tell me when service awards is gonna be 'cause we don't want to be gone when that's gonna happen?" Um, the um, you know, the, the holiday parties over there. You had to book, book the clubhouse in months in advance just to get a date to have your party. You know, your shift party and then you come, you bring your guest. The kids' Christmas, I saw those people's kids grow up. You know, a lotta 'em now that, that was in line to see Santa now's in college, you know,...

Christie: Yeah...

Sandra: ...and uh, they loved it. It was this just, just, that was just wonderful, that Christmas party. And we didn't getta have it last year. Um, they decided that the mood just wouldn't be conducive to what was going on at the plant. But I still got a lotta complaints. A lotta people thought we should go ahead...and I chose all the gifts, um, by age group. And um, and it was so nice because uh, a lotta times I would receive maybe a card from a mother after it was all over. And um, say you know, um, "My child really enjoyed what you chose, and I wanna thank you for doin' this." It was just really nice, you know,...

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: ...And um, lotta times after service awards, I'd get thank-you cards from people. You know, it was just uh, it was just a great, great place. I'm, I tell ya, it was, it, to m-, I considered it a blessing I've had, more than a place to earn a living, a good living. I really do consider it to uh, a blessing to me. And just knowin' all these people. You know, an learning, I just, I, I not only knew their name and what department they worked in and what job they did because I had to keep these records. They were paid according to what I told the payroll department and computer system to pay 'em. So they sent me a report on every move that was made on every individual. Whether if they were goin' to A to B shift. If they were gonna be off on a leave a absence. If they

were gonna uh, um, you know, I did all job postings. So I uh, if they were wanted a job, you know, I just, you just had to learn this stuff, and uh, you got to know these people just everything about...You knew the ones that were a problem. You know, and if you'd see that name, you'd go, "Oh no." You know, or you knew the ones maybe that needed employee assistance program for whatever reason. Maybe they had a drinking problem, maybe they were into drugs, maybe they needed some help for whatever reason. They had a, had a wonderful employee assistance program. Whereby, if, if that person came and said, "Hey, I got a problem, and I can't deal with it." Then they would get them the help they needed. You know, at no charge to the employee, and they were given time off to get rehabilitated. Um, just all these things, you know, so you get to know these people, not as an employee, but as a person. You know, uh, somebody comes in your office, and they're, you know, and the nurse isn't there, whatever, and they're in tears over some, someone said somethin' about, "Oh, I'm so upset," and they're goin' into hysterics, you know, you learn to, to deal with emotions and all this stuff. So I considered it a learning experience. Some of 'em not all pleasant, but um...

Christie: And with the plant, I guess, you all had a lotta similar emotions.

Sandra: Yeah, oh yeah. Particularly the nurse. I'm sure she had a lot more of it than I did. I was coming in the plant one morning, and I always came in the back, what I call the lil' black, back alley. I parked in the lot and then walked across the tracks and came in kind of the back way there into my office. And as I was comin' down through that little, and I called it an alley, well actually it was just like a breezeway between our old corrugated and our off-bearing area. And um, I heard a tow-motor coming, and I just got outta the way, you know, 'cause I, I always carried work home with me, and I had a buncha stuff I was carryin' in, and, and I just kinda got outta the way. Well, this tow-motor drove up beside me and just stopped. And it was a fella down at the maintenance and, and we said hello. And um, he said, "How're ya doin' kid?" And I said, "Oh, I'm, I'm doin' okay. How're you doin'?" and he said, "I'm not doin' very well." And I said, "You're not? Are you, you know, are you having some physical problems?" He says, "No, I'm, I'm, I just can't handle all..." and he loses, loses it, completely loses it.

Christie: Ohhh.

Sandra: And I said, "Well, you know," I said, "sometimes we kinda hafta have lil' bitta help to get through these things." But I, and I, and he was a skilled person, a tradesman, journeyman. And I told 'im, I said, "Look, you're still a young man." I said, "And look, you have all these credentials, you've completed your 8,000 hours of training," I said, "You know, these industries are gonna just be payin' big bucks to get a holda you." I said, "You really got a lot

to offer. You've been a wonderful employee. You have perfect work record here." And so we talked for a long time, and he kinda got straightened up. Then later he did, you know, hafta have some, some help. He really did. But you get to know these people, and even now, I'm wonderin' how he is. And his wife called the other day and said, "You know, I've got all this expensive medicine." And she's another one who's havin' trouble get, gettin' it paid for. And I, and so I was able to get that taken care of for her. But, and I was so anxious to hear how he was. And she said, "Well, I'm encouragin' him to maybe take some classes because," she said, "I think it might build his esteem a little bit." So see, I, I'm still very stuck on all these people...(laugh)

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: So I'd say It's gonna take me a long time. And the sooner I get to work, the easier it'll be for me. So I think probably I'm gonna have more trouble in that respect than other people because of the job I did. You know, I got so attached to everybody.

Christie: To everyone.

Sandra: Yeah.

Christie: Well, my understanding was people just saw their shift work, their own shift most of the time.

Sandra: Most of the time...

Christie: But you really had a contact with everybody on all the shifts?

Sandra: I did, yes. Yeah, mmm-hmm, yeah. I saw 'em all, I knew 'em all. And um, most of the time, if a person was scheduled to work A shift, that was, I mean, they knew who the other people were because sometimes they might shift transfer, you know, they might for whatever, they might take a job posting, and it might be on a different shift. And you'd, they kinda knew who the other people were, but they were more, you know, comfortable with their own group. Uh, and some of the groups were a lil' more difficult than others. But you find that everywhere. Uh, the people that worked at the end, I don't know how it was when I first went there because I wasn't in this position, but toward the end, the hourly folks were working very, very hard because we were short-handed. There was a lotta pressure on 'em. They worked very hard. and um, one of the girls said, "You know." She's in this um, they've offered a review class out to vo-tech to the people who just felt their skills had just, math skills and everything, were just nil, you know. So they've offered um, a um, review class out there. And um, I think, they were telling me last week, 'cause I'm takin' a WordPerfect class myself out there tonight, and they were tellin' me there's about 45 in that class. And that some of 'em had said you know, "We

just feel like after, you know, the redundancy of our job, you know, that our minds just aren't as sharp as what they ought to be." So um, a lot of people are seeing this that aren't, they're, they're movin', tryin', to do, you know, to re-program their lives. They really are. An awful lotta of 'em. So...

Christie: I guess a lotta people didn't have the same, um, chance to go to school the way you did and training...

Sandra: Um...

Christie: ...'cause it seems you've kept up a lotta the skills and...

Sandra: ...yeah...

Christie: education over the years.

Sandra: ...yeah, I have. Uh, of course, our, uh, improving the computer system as time went by, you know, we all got to learn all those things. And um, uh, I was certainly not a computer programmer, but I used, used the system everyday. Lotta of my job revolved 'round it, but uh, and they were in the process out in the selecting area. They were computerizing that area. And they were, they sent al-, oh, I tell ya, about 35 people uh, ladies to computer classes. So um, you know, Owens-Illinois was not stagnant. Never stagnant. Uh, our safety program, I had an individual call me, and he said, he just wanted to talk to me. He said, "You know, I got another job." And I said, "Wonderful." He said, "Yeah, but I quit." And I said, "Oh, not so wonderful." (laugh). "So what happened?" And it was on-, at a terminal, I think Ohio River Terminal, and he said, "I went to, to the job." He said, "There were men there with 30 years of experience." And he said, "I didn't get much training at all. And they put me on this job where I was pushin' these buttons." Somethin' about the coal, the way the coal would go out and empty into the barge or whatev-, whatever they do. And he said this one night, this big cable, he said which was as big around as me, one part of it had a problem, so the mechanic came to work on it, and he said then he approved it and it was okay to go, continue. And he said I pushed the buttons and that cable started out through there, and it broke. And said this man was down on the barge, and he said it was a great big man. And he said it hit him in the back of both legs and cut him so bad. And he said had it hit his body, his vital organs or in his head, it would have killed him. He said he fell and I jumped out of the booth where I was workin' and got to 'im. And said I pulled 'im back over the side of the barge and got 'im up, and he said I was screamin' to call an ambulance and he said I don't know where I got the strength to do this, but I did it. But he said uh, they had to send me home, I was so upset, and he said so I talked it over with my wife. And he said I went in and I told 'em I wadn't gonna stay because I didn't feel I was, you know, an appropriate person for that job. And I said you

worked at Owens; that's a dangerous place to work. He said yes, I worked at Owens, but safety was the key. He said we were trained; we had every safety, ever-, every kinda safety equipment that was necessary for the job we did. He said if you saw a safety hazard, you reported it. It was handled instantly. He said I, I can't get used to this, to, the, the fact that you have no concern for human life. And that was the thing at Owens, first and foremost was our employees' safety and health. That was the thing. And there was so much emphasis on that 'cause I worked with that promotion on that safety. And the safety coordinator and I did a um, a safety newsletter. That was probly one of, he and I talked about this. And I wanna give you his name and how to reach him because he is a wonderful man. His name is Norm Hanley, Norman Hanley. And he also lives in the west end. He's on Washington Avenue. And I can find his phone number for you. Um, he and I worked so close for years.

Christie: What was his position?

Sandra: It was, he was safety, over safety and security. At one point in time, uh, mid-80s, I guess, Tom Cravitz, the IR director, had been promoted and moved to, to our corporate office in Toledo. And we went a year with no uh, with no IR director or anybody. Just he and I did all personnel for a year by ourself.

Christie: Mmm.

Sandra: We did the United Way program, we did it all. And he was t-, t-, talkin' to me, he said, when you meet him, you'll s-, he's so kind. The most kind man I have ever met in my life, and you just keep this in mind when you meet 'im. Um, he said Sandy, have you thought back over that, and I said yes, I have. And he said, uh, how did we do that? I said I don't know. I said I don't know how we did it, Norman, but it was a pleasure to, to just to work with you that closely over the year. And he said I've thought about it many times, but he said we had the best, you know, Way program we ever had, didn't we? I said yeah, we did. (laugh) But we had Jim Kunkle who was the plant manager and he was just so supportive of us. But a funny story, I'll tell ya, um, and when you talk to Norm, you can relate this to 'im. He uh, we were havin', one department said, "Hey my department's gone a whole year. We've had no s-, no accidents. So we'd like a little promotion for 'em." So I said, "Okay, fine, what would like?" "Well, we'd like to do a cap. This is all men department, we'd like to do a cap." So we ordered the caps, and um, at that time, we were gettin' 'em from uh, I think it was called um, Area Promotions down in Ashland. Okay, it was like a blue cap and the lettering, wa-, they did the puffy stuff in gold, you know, um, machine repair department or forming department, whatever it was. No LTAs, lost time accidents, but we abbreviated LTAs. Um, and the year. Well, when they printed it, they printed the wrong year.

Christie: Ohh.

Sandra: So the caps came in, and we were so anxious to look at 'em, you know, I said Oh, Norm, these colors are so pretty. And I said, Norm, and he said, uh, [inaudible], I said, "Look at the year." (laugh) He said, "Ohhh, my goodness!"

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: "I mean what we gonna do?" Well, it was that puffy stuff, you know, they blow on there, so what we did, it was on a Friday, we started early afternoon, and we took a little sharp instrument and we scraped all of that last digit off. Then we used lacquer thinner with a stiff brush and re-brushed all that and got all that outta there. And then our sign shop person, who has since retired, and you talk about an artist. He was an artist, he was an artist per say. He printed in that last digit. We printed that, but what is so funny, we had about 200 of these to do. And I don't know if you've ever smelled lacquer thinner, but we were in the office, we went in the IR director's office 'cause he wasn't there, and we just had lil' bowls of that lacquer thinner, and we were just workin' and workin'. I hadn't eaten entire day. All of a sudden, everything I did was so funny. I was just gigglin' and gigglin' and gigglin' and gigglin'. I thought what's wrong with me? So it was about six in the evening, and the front door opens and Norm's wife comes in. She says, "Where is everybody?" She said, "Oh my gosh! This place is ready to blow up." It was the fumes from that lacquer thinner where we had been working hour after hour on that, and I was gettin' high on that stuff.

Christie: (chuckle, laugh) Oh, how funny!

Sandra: (laugh) We came in on Saturday, and finished the project and got it all done. And I told Norman...

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: I said, "I hope nobody lights a cigarette with that cap on for a few days, or they're gonna go psheww! (laugh)

Christie: (laugh) Oh, that's so funny!

Sandra: So, a few months later, we called the um, our ex-boss, who if we got into a problem, we could call 'im in Toledo. And I called 'im and I said, "We have a confession to make." I said, "We think it's safe now." So we told 'im, and he s-, he laughs about it to this day. He is s-, so funny. (laugh)

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: Those are the...

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: ...things that we'd get into that you just couldn't believe. (laugh)

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: But I don't know that I've got anything that you just can't live without more to add, but um, you know.

Christie: But your safety program, you said you got sort of a national award or something?

Sandra: I believe out of all...

Christie: ...or recognized?

Sandra: ...all the plants of the, all across the nation, we got Plant of the Year for 1989. Many safety awards, we got many safety awards.

Christie: Did you ever have injuries there?

Sandra: Oh yeah, we had injuries, but see, we had a, a um, light-duty program and um, if a person had an injury that their physician felt that they indeed d-, could be working, because in most instances, a person that's off due to an injury, they're gonna be very despondent and depressed, and they find they heal better if they're able to return ta, to work. So, uh, whether it be coming down offa soma helpin' me or anyone else in the, on the clerical staff. You know, we'd let 'em come down and if they had a uh, sprained foot, you know, I'd give 'em a stool and they'd prop their foot up and they do stuff that's takin' my time that, dat, you know, most people could do. And um, we offered that safety program and people were very cooperative about doin' it. We never lo-, we didn't have any lost-time injuries that time, and uh, we did a uh, a mug one time. A s-, uh, Irish mug uh, then when everybody came to the safety uh, dinner, you know, the outing, then they got a mug and a cap. Um, one time, we did um, sets, four glasses in a set, um, when we got Plant of the Year, that showed the award. We had that etched on the front of the, all those things.

Christie: Oh. Yeah, 'cause I was thinking how loud the plant was. I did have a chance to get in it one time. I was wonderin', I guess they all wear...

Sandra: Hearing protection...

Christie: ...proper equipment...

Sandra: ...even...

Christie: ...so they don't have long terms problems with it.

Sandra: ...that's right. Um, uh, even me, um, not the glasses I have on now, but the uh, my good pair of glasses, are safety glasses. You had to have safety glasses in that plant. That was a ruling. I mean, you...

Christie: [inaudible]

Sandra: ...could be terminated. Didn't matter, you did not walk in that plant without safety glasses on. You didn't walk out there without hearing protection. Even me, I'd have 'em hangin' around my shoulders, you know, and, and put 'em in my ears. And I hated to wear the stuff, but yeah, it was a requirement. Yes, uh, people who did um, tow-motor operating, they went through a complete training phase. Um, uh, videos, schoolings, presentations, we have a person who's stationed in Atlanta for this region, who is, that is his job. He deals with every kind of a safety problem you might have. If uh, OSHA would come in, you know, they would surprise ya and come in uh, for a um, inspection, safety inspections, you know, we had a whole group that, that accompanied those inspectors as they went throughout the plant. And if they found anything at all, you know, an-, and that person from Atlanta, that Atlanta plant would be here goin' right along with 'em. They had just completed a project down on E-furnace for um, acoustics down there, and it was all this stuff they were puttin' in the ceiling and walls to help that sound down around that, that. Evidently, that equipment had a lot more noise, you know, relating to the operation and soma the other. A very safety conscious place.

Christie: [inaudible]

Sandra: Yeah. And Norm can just really go on and on and on about it because he was, you know, I was gonna get a riding lawnmower for out here and he came out and says, "No lawnmower, Sandy. You're not heavy enough. If you start down the hill, that thing's gonna tip and it's just not safe 'nough for you to handle. (laugh)

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: They, we all just got to be a, like a family, you know.

Christie: That's wonderful.

Sandra: And Norm is like a brother to me. That's just how I feel 'bout 'im.

Christie: Now do you keep in touch with him...

Sandra: Oh sure....

Christie: ...since...

Sandra: ...yeah. Lottsa people...

Christie: I wasn't sure who you kept in touch with and who you didn't.

Sandra: ...call me. Oh yeah. The nurse, she's working and she'd only been with us six months. But we just learned to love her.

Christie: And who's that?

Sandra: Jan Grant. She is at um, the Corps, Corps of Engineers. And she says, "You just, I just gotta get you on up here." And I said, "Yeah, I'll get into civil services, and I probly waiting on that test now."

Christie: (laugh)

Sandra: Um, Norm and uh, Phil Schaffer was the IR director. He'd only been here a year when the plant closed. Phil is now uh, in New York until the end of August, and then he won't have a job. Um, Phil had been here in the, when I went to personnel in '83, he was the assistant IR director at that time. And I worked with him for a couple of years. And he got transferred to Lakeland, Fla., as the industrial relations director. So I knew him from before. Uh, Bill Bolenger was the um, industrial director prior to Phil. Now he's at the Atlanta plant. He even, he and I even keep in contact. And my IR director before him, Tom Cravitz, the one I said that I just loved so much, I just got a wedding invitation for his daughter's wedding...

Christie: Oh. How nice.

Sandra: ...this summer. So yeah, these people are friends for, these are friends, and you know, and uh, just, you know. I was uh, downtown the other day, I saw one of the guys comin' outta the fieldhouse. We'd been in doin' uh, he, he does uh, exercise therapy down there. And um, and he comes yellin' down the street, you know, wherever I go, I see somebody that's related to the plant some way.

Christie: Mmm-hmm.

Sandra: And lots of 'em, so many of 'em came and uh, and to tell me good-bye and all those things. Those are sad things. And the one fella who died just uh, three weeks ago, he came down. He was 52 years old, same age as me, and he'd planned all his life. He, he was a meticulous person, and he was in our machine repair area. And he'd built houses, you know, an-, and he built his home over on the south side, a beautiful home, and he had taken a leave in late '93 to go to St. Simon's Island, Ga., to build his retirement home. Well, when the announcement was made, he came back and worked and took his retirement and he died just three weeks ago. So, he came down to see me 'fore he left, and it was just a real wonderful good-bye that he had for me. I really, you know, I'll never forget it. And he s-, he had no idea he had any problems at all. He'd gone

to work on this house, and uh, when his wife went over at lunch ta, to see what he wanted for lunch, he was dead. And um, I just, I was really saddened by that. I just see all these things are gonna continue to be, you know, very close to me for a long time, I think.

Christie: Yeah.

Sandra: Mmm-hmm. But yeah, I think you're gonna find, I think as you go through interviewin' people, you're gonna, particularly some of the older people. They, Ike Effingham, he's gonna relate things to you that are just...I mean, he, I could just sit and listen forever. Some of the things that happened sooo many years ago, you know, and the way things were done. And um, that you will always will, I, I will predict this, you will always feel the uh, closeness of the O-I family through everybody you talk with. You will get that feeling. I predict.

Christie: That's what we've gotten so far. You know. Okay, well, thank you very much.

Sandra: Oh you're welcome.